

smiling, confident and polite, she repeatedly showed the world why she is a true champion. She was a wonderful representative of her family, her school (California Junior High School), her hometown (Olathe, Kansas), her sponsor (The Olathe Daily News), the state of Kansas and, indeed, our entire country.

In addition to the pride and confidence she has from achieving her goal, she also won scholarship money and prizes totaling \$40,000, which will come in handy, as Kavya aspires to become a neurosurgeon. Her interest in medicine was sparked when she prepared for—what else?—a spelling bee of medical terminology.

We also learned a good spelling lesson from her family's identical t-shirts, worn the day after the tournament, which said, "How do you spell 'champion?' S-H-I-V-A-S-H-A-N-K-A-R."

Finally, I would like to read into the RECORD an open letter written by Kavya, which was published in The Kansas City Star on June 21, 2009, and clearly shows the qualities that allowed her to reach this remarkable goal and that make Kavya such an inspiration to us all!

What an incredible ride it has been for me in my quest for the spelling bee championship! I have been participating in the Scripps National Spelling Bee since 2006. I went from 10th to 8th to 4th place, and then I was finally able to take the much coveted trophy in 2009.

I loved going to Washington, D.C., each year during the Memorial Day week! Bee Week has always been so much fun for me because I got to meet the contestants and socialize.

Many of them are returning spellers whom I looked forward to meeting each year, and some whom I keep in touch with by e-mail. All the regional champions believe in camaraderie and understand that the dictionary, not the other spellers, is their biggest foe.

The sportsmanship everyone has is inspiring. I feel sad that I am not able to participate in any more spelling bees because if you pass eighth grade or if you win the championship, you are not eligible to participate again.

Preparing for spelling bees takes a lot of desire, dedication, effort and time. My technique is to study root words and etymological patterns instead of memorizing.

This kind of preparation has greatly developed my vocabulary and has allowed me to learn so many new words and roots. But I have also learned so much more.

This journey has taught me how to set a goal and achieve it through discipline and hard work. I have also learned how to stay composed under pressure and developed my confidence. It also has really developed my public speaking skills.

After my victory, I was rushed into a whirlwind of media. My family and I traveled to New York so I could appear on "Live! With Regis and Kelly." We then went to Los Angeles for "Jimmy Kimmel Live." Those were both great shows, and I really enjoyed being on them.

When we returned home, a few local TV stations came to greet me at the airport along with some friends. Many more friends and neighbors were lined up on my street to congratulate me, holding up large posters. It was great to know that so many people supported me!

I received many calls, and I was especially thrilled when I received an invitation from the governor of Kansas, and calls and cards from senators and congressmen. It was exciting to know that I had their support and that they were able to take the time to con-

gratulate me. My family and I are expecting an invitation from the White House in the coming months.

I also received a letter from Children's Mercy Hospital inviting me to come to one of its hospitals to visit the neurology department and talk to the patients. This is a great opportunity, and I will be looking forward to more exciting opportunities like that, which will allow me to help the community in any way I can.

I have had a great experience and have learned many valuable lessons to carry on in life. Most importantly, preparing for spelling bees has brought me closer to my family. They have been a great source of support and encouragement throughout the whole journey.

The bonds that have been forged and strengthened through this process mean more to me than any other aspect of my spelling experience.

I am thankful to everyone who has helped and supported me throughout this whole experience, especially everyone in the Kansas City area. My advice to my peers is to follow your dream, and be able to put in the hard work and effort to achieve it.

HONORING CAPTAIN SHAWN WARNEKE OF THE ST. CLOUD CIVIL AIR PATROL FOR RECEIVING THE DISASTER RELIEF COMMENDATION

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Shawn Warneke, a true patriot and a member of the St. Cloud Civil Air Patrol. Capt. Warneke has received the Disaster Relief Commendation ribbon for his extraordinary work and leadership during the severe flooding in North Dakota this spring. I recently supported House Resolution 415 and commended all Civil Air Patrol members for their unprecedented efforts in Fargo and Moorhead, and now it is my privilege to highlight Capt. Warneke's individual contributions that helped lead to the successful sandbagging that saved hundreds of homes.

The devastating floods in the Fargo-Moorhead communities inspired hundreds of volunteers to take time off work and help their neighbors. Capt. Warneke's unique background set him apart from many volunteers. As Lead Security Officer for the Transportation Security Administration at the St. Cloud Regional Airport, Capt. Warneke's experience allowed him to effectively transport, supervise and assist C.A.P. cadets and senior members during the sandbagging efforts. He also helped local citizens with evacuation and provided security to the area.

Capt. Warneke has made service to our nation a daily routine. As the Deputy Commander of his squadron, Capt. Warneke trains the C.A.P. Color Guard. He is a graduate of the Blue Beret Leadership Academy and soon will be certified as an official Civil Air Patrol Mission Pilot. Captain Blaine Pierson, Squadron Commander of the St. Cloud Composite Squadron, said this about Capt. Warneke: "His dedication to Civil Air Patrol, Homeland Security and his country is constantly evidenced by his attention to duty and the responsibilities entrusted to him."

I rise today to honor Capt. Shawn R. Warneke in front of this Congress for his service to his country, as a sign of my appreciation and gratitude. Capt. Warneke has dedicated his life to ensuring freedoms and security for all individuals as a part of our Homeland Security defenses and a volunteer member of the Civil Air Patrol. His commendation ribbon is a fitting display of the compassion with which he carries out those duties every day.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks as well as in accordance with Clause 9 of Rule XXI, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks for my Congressional District as a part of H.R. 3082, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2010.

Requesting Member: Congressman BILL POSEY—Expressing support for the President's funding level for the Orlando Veterans Hospital.

Project Funding Amount: The President's budget request of \$371,300,000.

Bill Number: H.R. 3082, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2010

Account: Major Construction

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Department of Veterans Affairs

Address of Requesting Entity: Department of Veterans Affairs

Description of Request: This funding is equal to the amount proposed by the President in his FY 2010 budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs budget. This will enable the VA to complete the construction of the Veterans Hospital in the Orlando area.

Consistent with Republican Leadership's policy on earmarks, I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge this request (1) is not directed to any entity or program that will be named after a sitting Member of Congress; (2) is not intended to be used by an entity to secure funds for entities unless the use of the funding is consistent with the specified purpose of the earmark; and (3) meets or exceeds all statutory requirements for matching funds where applicable.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on Congressionally-directed project funding, I am submitting the following information regarding project funding I requested for Southeast Louisiana as part of the Fiscal Year 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Requesting Member: Congressman STEVE SCALISE

Bill Number: Fiscal Year 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010